

IMPERIAL MAIL MARKING MACHINE COMPANY

"BOSTON" MACHINE CANCELS USED IN GREAT BRITAIN

1898 - 1907

Purpose & Scope. To trace the use and development of the Boston Machine in London and Liverpool.

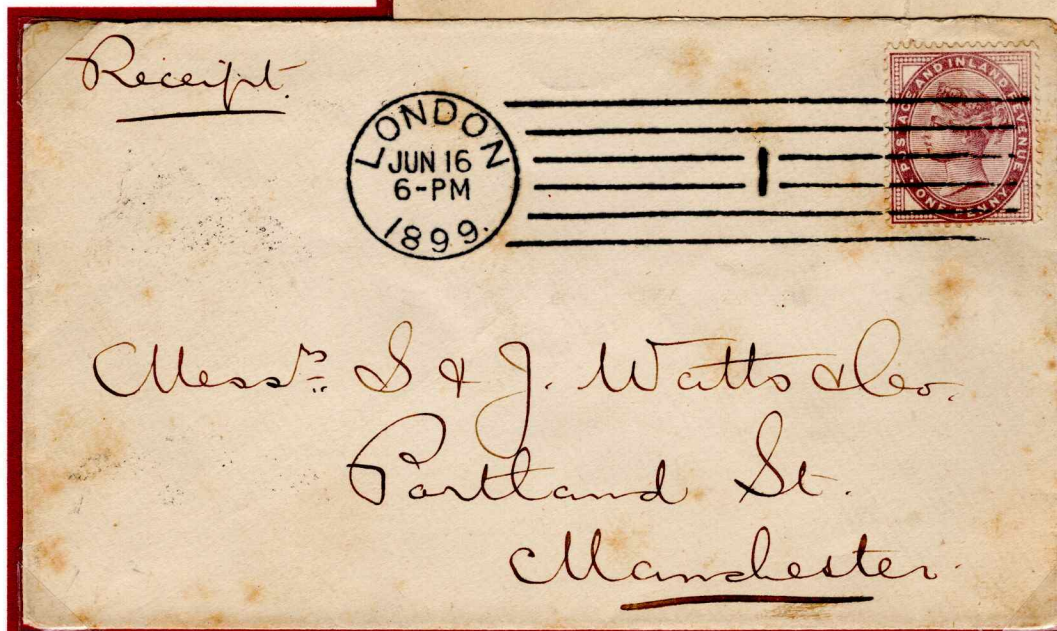
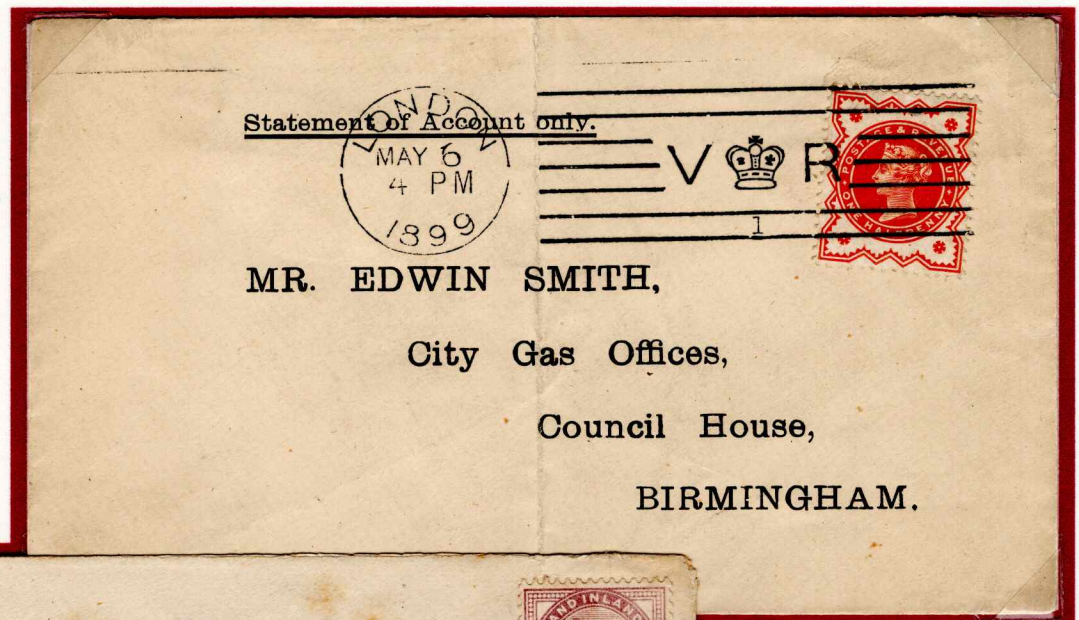
Treatment. The exhibit is laid out in numerical machine order with dial/canceller/known use table on the first page of each machine, London first followed by Liverpool. Accessible information both archival and official is limited.

Background. Just after the first trial of the Canadian Postal Supply Company machine the "Bickerdike", the British Post Office (GPO) could not reach an agreement on purchase terms for their machines. This opened an opportunity for the American Postal Machines Company of Boston, which had previously submitted their "Boston" machine. This test was conducted between August 27 and September 30, 1898. The Imperial Mail Marking Company was the Canadian office of the American Postal Supply Company. The "Boston" machine was very similar to the "Ethridge" the main difference being the "Boston" was powered by electricity instead of steam.

The American Postal Machine Company offered the GPO twelve of their machines at a great price and with good terms. When the Canadian Postal Supply Company heard of this, they proceeded to match the offer which resulted in the GPO accepting both offers. The result was the leasing of six machines from each company and tested between 1899 and 1900. In 1900 the GPO purchased all twelve machines in addition to two more from each company to conduct further tests in Liverpool.

Epilogue. In 1907 the Boston Machine Cancel and its competition, the Bickerdike, were withdrawn.

The competition, "Bickerdike" cancel from May 6, 1899 Machine 1, London to Birmingham. ½d Commercial Letter rate *Very early use*



Example of the Boston" cancel from Jun 16, 1899 Machine 1 London to Manchester 1d Letter rate

Significant items included in the exhibit are highlighted with blue borders and **red bold italics**. Earliest and latest known dates updated show